THE ARCHITECTURAL AND CULTURAL EVOLUTION OF THE GOODING UNIVERSITY INN

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Introduction to the Site and Its Historical Trajectory

The physical landscape of the American West is dotted with imposing institutional structures that have undergone profound functional transformations in response to shifting societal needs, economic pressures, and public health crises. Among these, the property currently operating as the Gooding University Inn in Gooding, Idaho, stands as a uniquely layered case study in architectural reuse, historical trauma, and the modern sociological phenomenon of dark tourism.[1] Over the course of a century, this sprawling, 19,000-square-foot facility has served three distinctly different primary functions: an aspirational institution of higher learning known as Gooding College, a critical public health sanctuary during a devastating respiratory epidemic acting as the Idaho State Tuberculosis Hospital, and finally, a commercial hospitality venture heavily intertwined with paranormal folklore, operating initially as the Get Inn and subsequently as the Gooding University Inn.[1]

To fully understand the contemporary cultural footprint of the Gooding University Inn, it is absolutely necessary to examine the site not merely as a collection of bricks, mortar, and timber, but as an evolving repository of collective regional memory. The physical structure has absorbed the localized, devastating impacts of the Great Depression, the logistical paralysis and resource diversion of World War II, the mid-twentieth-century medical battle against the "White Plague" (tuberculosis), and the twenty-first-century commercial commodification of the paranormal.[1] Today, the site operates exactly at the intersection of historical preser-

vation and commercialized folklore, where the genuine historical suffering of former tuberculosis patients and the tragic personal narratives of the property's inhabitants have been synthesized into a highly marketable destination for paranormal investigators, thrill-seekers, and national media productions.[4]

This comprehensive report provides an exhaustive, multi-disciplinary analysis of the site's architectural genesis, its distinct institutional eras, its prolonged period of structural decay, and its ultimate resurrection as a highly publicized locus of supernatural activity. By tracing the lineage of the property from its philanthropic beginnings through its darkest epidemiological days, this analysis will articulate how a single plot of land in southern Idaho came to encapsulate the broader narrative arcs of the American century.

The Collegiate Era: Ambition, Education, and Architectural Grandeur (1917–1938)

The origin of the Gooding campus is deeply rooted in the early twentieth-century drive to bring formal higher education and cultural refinement to the rural, rapidly developing expanses of the Inland Empire. During this era, remote agricultural communities recognized that long-term regional viability required the establishment of localized academic institutions to prevent the intellectual drain of their youth to more established eastern or coastal cities. The founding of Gooding College was spearheaded by the Methodist Episcopal Church, a denomination highly active in establishing frontier colleges, and was bolstered by sig-

nificant financial and land donations from Frank Gooding, a prominent political figure, wealthy sheep rancher, and former Governor of Idaho whose name the town bears.[6]

The Vision and Operational Reality of Gooding College

At its inception, Gooding College was intended to serve as a beacon of academic, moral, and cultural advancement in southern Idaho. It was positioned to effectively become the sole institution offering higher education in the vast geographic expanse located between Caldwell in the west and Pocatello in the east.[8] The initial capitalization of the college was an impressive philanthropic feat for the era and the rural region, with early historical references indicating that the necessary $400,000 in funding had been successfully raised through community and church efforts to commence the ambitious building project.[6]

The institution was remarkably progressive in its structural and academic offerings, intentionally designed to meet the diverse and unique needs of an agrarian, working-class population. It offered a standard Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree, but the administration also recognized that many local residents were tied to the seasonal demands of farming and ranching. To accommodate this, the college provided highly accessible night classes and summer school sessions for those whose labor schedules precluded standard daytime academic attendance.[6]

Under the prolonged, stabilizing leadership of Dr. Charles Wesley Tenney, who served as the college president for the majority of its existence from 1917 to 1935, the school rapidly established a strong regional reputation, par-

ticularly in the arts, humanities, and rhetorical disciplines.[6] Gooding College boasted a highly active touring glee club and a fiercely competitive intercollegiate debate team known as the Bobcats, which regularly challenged larger institutions.[6] Furthermore, the college's athletic program engaged in robust regional competition, joining the Southern Idaho Intercollegiate Conference where they competed alongside Albion Normal School, the College of Idaho, Pocatello Technical, and Ricks College.[6] Historical athletic records indicate that their baseball teams were active as early as 1918, and they began playing intercollegiate football in 1919, despite suffering heavy defeats in their inaugural collegiate games, such as a staggering 90-0 loss to the College of Idaho.[6]

By 1928, the college reached its operational zenith, boasting a peak enrollment of 209 dedicated students.[6] However, the structural financial model of the institution was inherently fragile. Like many small, private, religiously affiliated colleges of the era, Gooding College was heavily reliant on sustained philanthropy, church subsidies, and consistent tuition enrollment. These pillars of financial support were catastrophically undermined by the onset of the Great Depression. The resulting economic hemorrhage decimated the local agricultural economy, wiping out the savings of prospective students and drying up donor capital. This financial desperation forced Dr. Tenney to resign in 1935 amidst mounting pressure from the board to fundamentally alter the curriculum toward non-academic, vocational subjects simply to attract tuition dollars.[9] Following brief, tumultuous tenures by subsequent administrators, including

W.F. Shaw and acting president Rev. W.H. Hertzog, the financial losses became entirely insurmountable, leading to the heartbreaking and permanent closure of Gooding College in 1938.[8]

Architectural Significance and the Work of Tourtellotte & Hummel

The physical environment of Gooding College was not an afterthought; it was meticulously designed to project an aura of permanence, respectability, and an inviting domesticity that would appeal to rural families sending their children away from home for the first time. To achieve this specific atmosphere, the founders contracted Hummel Architects, operating at the time under the highly prestigious partnership name of Tourtellotte & Hummel.[11] Based in Boise, John E. Tourtellotte and Charles Hummel were already deeply entrenched as the premier architects of the state's civic and religious identity, having designed monumental structures such as the Idaho State Capitol building, the Collegiate Gothic Administration Building at the University of Idaho in Moscow, and the Romanesque Revival Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Boise.[11]

For the Gooding College project, however, Tourtellotte & Hummel made a conscious departure from the grand neoclassical, Egyptian Revival, or highly ornate Gothic styles they frequently utilized for civic centers and cathedrals. Instead, they opted for an "institutional residential" aesthetic.[12] This specific design philosophy was explicitly chosen to create a built environment that felt less like an intimidating, monolithic academic institution and more like a

magnified, comforting domestic space. The architects aimed to capture an "informality akin to that of the ubiquitous bungalow," which was deemed psychologically appropriate for a remote boarding school situated in a rural landscape.[12]

The original master plan conceived by Tourtellotte & Hummel was exceptionally ambitious, envisioning a sweeping, 110-acre campus featuring eight distinct buildings and a dedicated athletic stadium situated on a level site on the southern margin of Gooding, which represented the highest point in the immediate area offering a commanding prospect over the town.[2] Ultimately, the economic realities of the era meant that only two of the primary academic and dormitory structures were fully realized during the college's operational lifespan.

Building Designation	Year Completed	Architectural Dimensions	Struc Aesthetitures

Building A (Primary Dormitory)	1917	46 by 150 feet	Const with a ta tion-base of rough- dom-cou stone. Th stories fe buff-colo Capped v hipped ro long later exposed r and low- dormers. nally feat open, cer porch wi wooden p

Building B (Boys Dormitory & Gymnasium)	1920	44 by 156 feet	Desig nearly id Building scale, an to create tural sym Utilized t buff bric stone bas with a la ridged hi Featured closely ra dormers front slo flat-roofe supporte squared columns.

The two realized structures were deliberately and carefully spaced apart by the architects. This physical gap was intended to eventually accommodate a grand, 93-by-155-foot administration building featuring an elaborate Ionic portico and stylized pediments.[12] Architectural drawings for this centerpiece exist, but the building was never constructed due to the institution's premature financial demise, leaving a void in the center of the campus that would later be filled by a very different type of institution.[12]

The Public Health Crisis and the Tuberculosis Hospital Era (1941–1976)

Following the tragic closure of the college in 1938, the sprawling 110-acre property initially reverted to the Conference Claimants (Pension) Board of the Idaho Conference of the Methodist Church, which had previously loaned the institution significant capital in a failed attempt to keep the school functioning.[6] For a few years, the massive buff-brick buildings sat largely underutilized, a silent monument to failed educational aspirations. However, the state of Idaho was simultaneously grappling with a severe epidemiological crisis that required immediate, large-scale infrastructural intervention.

State Acquisition and the Impact of World War II

In the early 1940s, the western United States, including the state of Idaho, faced a pressing and deadly shortage of localized healthcare facilities capable of treating pulmonary tuberculosis. Highly contagious and frequently fatal in the pre-antibiotic era, tuberculosis (often referred to historically as the "White Plague" or "consumption") required long-term, specialized care. Prior to the redevelopment of the Gooding property, tuberculosis patients residing in southern Idaho faced a dire lack of accessible, dedicated care. Patients diagnosed with the disease were routinely subjected to arduous transfers to St. Al's hospital in Boise or to distant, specialized facilities in the northern panhandle of Idaho.[1] Both of these alternative facilities possessed critically limited bed capacities and were entirely insufficient for

managing a highly infectious respiratory disease outbreak in the southern agricultural regions.[1]

To bridge this massive geographical and medical gap in care, the Methodist Church made a highly consequential philanthropic decision. In 1941, the church formally donated the Gooding College property, including the remaining structures, to the state of Idaho.[1] This transfer was executed free and clear of all mortgages and encumbrances, with the explicit caveat that the state would convert the property into a dedicated, modern tuberculosis sanatorium.[1] The Idaho state legislature formalized this transition by passing a bill, codified as Title 66, Chapter 10, Section 66-1001 of the Idaho Code, which legally mandated that a hospital for the care and treatment of persons having tuberculosis be established, remodeled, and equipped upon the specific acreage tracts (26, 31, 32, and 37) of the South Gooding Acreage.[14]

However, the timeline from legislative acquisition to operational medical reality was severely and immediately hindered by global geopolitical events. The outbreak of World War II triggered massive domestic labor shortages, critical supply chain disruptions for building materials, and the necessary diversion of both state and federal funds toward the war effort.[1] The renovation and expansion of the Gooding hospital were brought to a virtual standstill as wartime rationing took precedence over domestic public health infrastructure. While the medical community and the afflicted population waited desperately for the facility to be finished, patients continued to be squeezed into the inadequate facilities in Boise and the north.[1] It was not until May 1947, nearly seven full years after the initial property transfer, that

the Idaho State Tuberculosis Hospital was finally able to officially open its doors to admit patients.[1]

Medical Operations, Isolation, and Institutional Reality

Upon its highly anticipated opening in 1947, the Gooding facility was widely recognized as one of the most medically advanced and well-equipped tuberculosis hospitals in the entire United States.[1] To fully accommodate the highly specific logistical and quarantine needs of a large-scale medical facility, the state commissioned the construction of a modern, utilitarian three-story brick hospital structure situated directly between the original 1917 and 1920 college dormitories, effectively filling the architectural void left by the unbuilt collegiate administration building.[6] With this new addition, the complex possessed the capacity to actively care for up to 150 patients simultaneously.[1]

The operational history of the Gooding tuberculosis hospital is deeply characterized by the inherent psychological trauma and physical tolls of mid-twentieth-century disease management. Before the widespread synthesis, distribution, and efficacy of antibiotic therapies (such as streptomycin and isoniazid in the 1950s), tuberculosis treatment relied heavily on the traditional "sanatorium cure." This grueling regimen mandated strict physical isolation from the general public, enforced prolonged, absolute bed rest to reduce lung strain, and continuous exposure to fresh, cold air. Consequently, the hospital environment was one where patients were effectively quarantined for months, or frequently, several years.

The Gooding facility, by its very medical nature, was an environment defined by isolation, chronic suffering, and high mortality.[4] Patients admitted to the hospital were abruptly separated from their families, children, and communities, living in a constant state of agonizing uncertainty regarding their ultimate prognosis. The architectural layout of the facility reflected its dual nature as both a place of healing and a place of permanent residence for the staff. The ground floor of the hospital was largely dedicated to the initial patient intake areas and the primary clinical offices for the attending doctors.[15] Conversely, the second floor was utilized as the dedicated living quarters and bedrooms for the nursing staff. Interestingly, historical accounts indicate that the facility also featured a small social gathering area where the nurses and medical staff would host regular Saturday night dances to maintain morale.[15] This jarring juxtaposition—vibrant social dances occurring mere floors away from patients slowly suffocating from chronic lung necrosis—highlights the surreal, highly compartmentalized reality of life within a mid-century sanatorium.[15]

The Elmwood Cemetery and the Anonymity of Institutional Death

The immense lethality of tuberculosis during this specific era meant that a significant percentage of the patients who were transferred to the Gooding hospital ultimately succumbed to the disease within its walls.[3] The logistics of processing death in a crowded, state-run institution frequently resulted in highly impersonal, heavily bureaucratic, and tragic funerary practices.

A stark, enduring testament to this era of mass institutional death is the presence of the nearby Elmwood Cemetery in Gooding, where many of the deceased wards of the state were permanently interred. The practices here closely mirrored those at other state facilities, such as the State Hospital South Cemetery in Blackfoot, Idaho, where nearly 1,000 inmates of the psychiatric facility were buried in an adjacent, largely forgotten plot.[16] In Gooding, victims of the infectious disease who had no surviving family members willing or able to claim their infectious remains were often buried with minimal ceremony by the state.

The graves of these indigent tuberculosis patients in the Elmwood Cemetery are widely characterized as being entirely nameless, marked only by rudimentary sequential numbers stamped into small concrete blocks or metal markers assigned by the state bureaucracy.[17] This systemic erasure of individual human identity in death profoundly underscores the ultimate tragedy of the sanatorium era. Today, the visual of these weathered, numbered headstones scattered along a dirt path against a desolate backdrop of pine trees and high-desert sagebrush creates a heavy atmospheric weight that significantly influences modern, paranormal perceptions of the hospital site.[18] The belief that the souls of these nameless patients are unable to rest due to their anonymous, institutionalized deaths forms a foundational pillar of the property's modern haunted folklore.[17]

The hospital remained a critical, life-saving component of the regional healthcare infrastructure for nearly three decades. However, as advanced pharmacological treatments became widely available and highly effective, the disease

was largely eradicated as a widespread public health emergency. Consequently, the need for massive, large-scale, dedicated quarantine sanatoriums plummeted across the country. The Idaho State Tuberculosis Hospital, having successfully fulfilled its mandate, officially ceased operations in 1976.[1] Following its closure, the sprawling campus was dismantled, resulting in the eventual demolition of all but one of the original major buildings (Building B, the 1920 dormitory) on the immediate campus footprint.[1]

Abandonment, Preservation, and the Transition to Hospitality (1976–Present)

The permanent closure of the hospital in 1976 plunged the surviving 1920 architectural structure into a prolonged, dark period of vacancy, vandalism, and structural neglect.[6] For several decades, the massive building sat empty, acting as an imposing, decaying brick relic on the edge of the small agricultural town. During this era of abandonment, however, the building's undeniable historical and architectural significance was formally recognized by preservationists. In 1980, the campus was extensively photographed by architectural historian Patricia Wright as part of a formal application process, and in 1983, the site was officially added to the National Register of Historic Places.[6] Despite this prestigious federal recognition, the property continued to sit largely vacant and decaying, lacking the massive capital required for adaptive reuse.

The Woodford Era and the Experiment of "The Get Inn" (2002–2012)

The modern resurrection of the historic building finally began in earnest around 2002 when private real estate investors Tony and Elisha Woodford, partnering with Gary Hannon, purchased the remaining five acres of the property and the surviving 19,000-square-foot brick structure.[2] The partners recognized the unique historical charm, the massive spatial potential of the building, and the growing market for unique lodging, and subsequently embarked on an extensive, highly capital-intensive remodeling project.

The initial phase of their ambitious renovation covered approximately two-thirds of the massive former hospital. It involved critical, foundational infrastructure updates necessary to bring a 1920s institutional building up to modern commercial code. This included the installation of a completely new roof, the lowering of the original cavernous ceilings to improve energy efficiency, the installation of modern, historically appropriate windows, and the implementation of a comprehensive, building-wide heating and cooling system.[2] The aesthetic updates included fresh paint and new carpeting throughout the sprawling hallways. The ultimate goal was to convert the sterile former medical wards and collegiate dormitories into a warm, functional hospitality venue.

In October 2007, following years of labor, the property was officially opened to the public as "The Get Inn." In this iteration, it operated as an expansive eight-bedroom bed and breakfast featuring communal bathrooms and large, shared gathering areas designed to foster a sense of com-

munity among guests.[2] It was during this era that the modern folklore of the building began to publicly crystallize. The Woodfords themselves reported early, unexplainable phenomena. In one widely circulated local account, Elisha Woodford recounted placing a restless young nephew in one of the rooms to sleep. After leaving the room briefly, she returned to find the previously crying child sound asleep, with his sheets perfectly and tightly tucked in using precision "hospital corners"—a physical manipulation of the bedding that the toddler was entirely incapable of performing himself.[2] Such incidents laid the groundwork for the inn's supernatural reputation.

However, the immense financial and logistical realities of operating a boutique hospitality venture in a massive, aging, and increasingly notoriously haunted building in a rural market proved exceptionally challenging. "The Get Inn" eventually succumbed to these pressures and closed its doors around 2012, setting the stage for the property's most recent, highly publicized, and culturally significant iteration.[8]

Svetlana Brown, the Gooding University Inn, and Intentional Rustic Charm

Following the closure of the Get Inn, the property underwent further conceptualization, ownership changes, and rebranding, eventually reopening as the Gooding University Inn.[8] Under the current ownership of Svetlana Brown, the facility has fully embraced a highly specific dual identity: it serves as a rustic, historically textured retreat capable of accommodating large groups, while simultaneously act-

ing as a ground-zero location for the booming paranormal tourism industry.[3]

The current management explicitly markets the inn as a radical departure from the sterile, predictable, "cookie-cutter" experiences offered by modern corporate hotel chains.[19] The ongoing restoration process is candidly described to prospective guests as a "work in progress," intentionally maintaining a rustic, slightly unfinished, and open environment that features long, echoing hallways, dorm-style lodging options, and subtle school-inspired thematic elements.[19] While the facility has been heavily modernized with highly desirable group amenities—such as a dedicated theater room featuring high-definition surround sound and fully remodeled, massive kitchens designed to easily accommodate large family reunions and corporate getaways—the building consciously retains the visible architectural scars and structural echoes of its institutional past.[19] This balance of modern comfort and preserved historical grit is crucial to its appeal.

The Commodification of Trauma: Paranormal Folklore and Dark Tourism

The most prominent, economically vital, and culturally fascinating contemporary aspect of the Gooding University Inn is its pervasive, internationally recognized reputation as one of the most aggressively haunted locations in the American West.[3] The seamless transition from an abandoned medical quarantine facility to a highly sought-after

nexus of paranormal activity represents a classic sociological progression within the realm of dark tourism.

The Psychology and Taxonomy of Institutional Hauntings

When a physical structure serves for decades as a site of intense, concentrated human suffering, isolation, and mass mortality—as is the grim reality with early twentieth-century tuberculosis sanatoria—it frequently becomes a massive canvas for collective societal projection. The profound psychological trauma of isolation, the prolonged physiological agony characteristic of respiratory failure, and the ultimate, tragic anonymity of numbered graves in the adjacent cemetery create an environment that is perfectly ripe for the generation of ghostlore. The natural creaks, groans, and drafts of a settling, 19,000-square-foot, century-old brick building are easily and instinctively reinterpreted by modern visitors through the psychological framework of the site's dark, tragic history.[6]

At the Gooding University Inn, this paranormal folklore is not merely a collection of vague bumps in the night; it is highly structured, revolving around specific, recurring archetypes that directly and symbolically mirror the building's institutional past. The reports collected from guests, staff, and paranormal investigators can be categorized into distinct phenomenological profiles:

Reported Entity or Phenomenon	Primary Location of Activity	Phenomenolog Details and Senso Inputs

The Angry Old Man / The Doctor	The Attic / Upper Hallways	Widely describe a highly aggressive, bodied apparition o older man wearing white clinical coat. presence generates whelming feelings dark, evil energy. T perceived threat is s substantial that the rent owner, Svetlan Brown, and her staf outright refuse to e the attic spaces.[3]
Ghostly Children and the Mother Figure	Main Hallways / Guest Bedrooms	Frequent report apparitions featurin woman accompanie a young girl. Pheno ena include the sou of phantom childre playing, physical ob (such as balls) rollin autonomously acros uneven floors, and seen hands physical teracting with guest such as tucking the firmly into bed.[2]

Disembodied Sensory and Auditory Inputs	Distributed Throughout the Entire Facility	A pervasive base of paranormal activ including unexplain whispers, heavy dis bodied footsteps pa the empty corridors sudden drops in ten ature, and physical s sations of being "po or touched by unsee entities, culminatin overwhelming feeli of psychological dre

One of the most profound and emotionally manipulative elements of the inn's modern haunting narrative is its deep connection to the current owner, Svetlana Brown. Various media reports, paranormal investigators, and television broadcasts have heavily emphasized a devastating personal tragedy involving the loss of Brown's own children.[5] This deeply personal tragedy has been folded into the mythology of the building, suggesting a deeply emotional and potentially tethered connection between the grieving owner and the juvenile spirits purported to roam the building.[5] The intertwining of the owner's contemporary personal trauma with the historical, medical trauma of the TB hospital creates a highly potent, emotionally charged narrative matrix that significantly amplifies the psychological resonance and terror of the site for visitors.

Media Amplification: *Ghost Adventures* and Professional Investigations

The localized folklore surrounding the Gooding University Inn was permanently catapulted into the national and international consciousness by the travel, entertainment, and reality television industry. The site was prominently selected and featured on the Travel Channel's highly successful and influential paranormal reality series *Ghost Adventures*, led by lead investigator and host Zak Bagans.

The resulting episode (variously cataloged across streaming platforms as Season 21, Episode 12, or Season 18, Episode 12) fundamentally and permanently altered the public perception and economic trajectory of the inn.[5] During their highly dramatized dusk-to-dawn physical lockdown inside the facility, the television crew utilized a massive array of advanced technical equipment to document the purported supernatural activity. This arsenal included spirit boxes (devices that rapidly scan radio frequencies to generate white noise, theoretically allowing spirits to manipulate the audio into words), high-definition night vision and thermal cameras, and highly sensitive EVP (Electronic Voice Phenomenon) audio recorders.[5]

Bagans and his investigative team focused their narrative heavily on the terrifying, oppressive atmosphere of the basement and the attic, the aggressive spirit of the "angry old man," and the deeply tragic backstory of Svetlana Brown's children.[3] A chilling centerpiece of the national broadcast was the capture of an EVP recording in which a raspy, unexplainable dark voice audibly and directly responded to Bagans' aggressive provocation: "Is there some-

thing evil here?".[13] The visual evidence presented included a parade of flashing lights, autonomous auditory interruptions, and the capture of strange mists and orbs on camera, leaving the crew visibly on edge.[5] The show's narrative structure—which frequently focuses on the darkest possible interpretations of a site's history, much like their famous coverage of the tragic Elisa Lam case at the Cecil Hotel—effectively cemented Gooding's reputation as a location of legitimate supernatural danger.[5]

The intervention of a major media property like *Ghost Adventures* serves a highly specific function in dark tourism: it validates and officially codifies local, oral legends. It translates abstract, subjective feelings of unease experienced by random guests into documented, broadcasted, and widely consumed "evidence," thereby transforming the inn from a quirky, slightly spooky historical bed and breakfast into a premier, must-visit destination for serious dark tourism enthusiasts.

The robust Economy of the Paranormal

Following its massive national television exposure, the Gooding University Inn has highly successfully integrated paranormal investigation into its core commercial business model. The site is now frequently utilized and rented out by both professional and amateur ghost-hunting organizations. Most notably, it serves as a primary research site for Western Idaho Paranormal Inc. (W.I.P.), a dedicated nonprofit organization focused on scientific, professional paranormal investigation and documentation across the Pacific Northwest.[4] Investigators from W.I.P., such as Jennifer

Ward, have publicly shared and promoted highly compelling EVP evidence and chilling accounts of full-bodied apparitions encountered in the hallways, further cementing the location's dark, empirical reputation among paranormal purists.[4] The ongoing debate among these groups is whether the activity is merely residual energy—a "recording" of past trauma—or an intelligent, potentially sinister presence actively interacting with the living.[4]

Simultaneously, massive commercial event enterprises such as "Ghost Hunts USA" have routinely leased the property to offer highly structured, premium-ticketed access to the general public.[13] These highly organized commercial events offer thrill-seekers and "brave souls" the unique opportunity to engage in expert-led group séances, psychic medium vigils, and the hands-on use of professional ghost hunting equipment like trigger objects, K2 meters, and EMF (Electromagnetic Field) detectors.[13] The pricing and structure of these events are heavily tiered, ranging from non-sleepover excursions that conclude at 4:00 a.m. to immersive, full sleepover experiences extending to 10:00 a.m., explicitly and unabashedly commodifying the terror, isolation, and historical weight of the former TB hospital.[13]

The success of this dark tourism model is highly evident in the property's continued survival and financial relevance in the modern era. Despite the grim associations with infectious disease and mass mortality—or, more accurately and fundamentally, precisely because of them—the Gooding University Inn maintains a highly robust commercial presence. It successfully holds high user ratings, such as an excellent 4.8-star rating on hospitality platforms like Vrbo, while

simultaneously catering heavily to a massive niche demographic fundamentally drawn to the macabre and the unexplained.[1]

Conclusion

The Gooding University Inn is a profound, imposing architectural survivor that physically maps the socio-historical, economic, and medical priorities of twentieth-century Idaho. Its massive, buff-brick walls, originally designed by the prestigious firm of Tourtellotte & Hummel to foster rural collegiate ambition, artistic expression, and regional pride, were fundamentally repurposed by necessity to contain the invisible, lethal, and terrifying threat of a global tuberculosis epidemic. The jarring transition from an optimistic environment of academic vitality and youthful debate teams to one of strict medical isolation, chronic suffering, and high mortality—culminating in the anonymous, numbered graves of the nearby Elmwood Cemetery—inscribed a deep, permanent psychological scar on the property and the surrounding community.

Today, the inn stands as a premier, highly successful example of how structural abandonment, historical tragedy, and medical trauma can organically coalesce into modern, monetized folklore. Driven by the innate human desire to interact with the mysteries of mortality and the past, and massively amplified by the potent reach of reality television and the commercial paranormal tourism industry, the tragic realities of the Idaho State Tuberculosis Hospital have been brilliantly alchemized into a thriving commercial enter-

prise. The Gooding University Inn does not shy away from its darkest eras; instead, it fully embraces them, offering a unique physical space where history, institutional memory, and supernatural mythology are permanently and inextricably entwined.

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